NAPSNet Daily Report 20 March, 2002

Recommended Citation

"NAPSNet Daily Report 20 March, 2002", NAPSNet Daily Report, March 20, 2002, https://nautilus.org/napsnet/napsnet-daily-report/napsnet-daily-report-20-march-2002/

CONTENTS

I. United States

1. DPRK Non-certification
2. DPRK-PRC Refugee Search
3. CIA View of PRC Militarization
4. PRC-ROK Relations
5. PRC Nuclear Posture
6. PRC View of Taiwan-US Relations
7. ROK-US Joint Military Exercises
8. ROK View of DPRK-US Relations

I. United States

1. DPRK Non-certification

Whitehouse Daily Briefings (Ari Fleicher, "U.S. WILL NOT CERTIFY THAT NORTH KOREA IS ADHERING TO 1994 AGREEMENT," 03/20/02) reported that the US will not certify to the US Congress that the DPRK is adhering to a 1994 agreement aimed at containing its nuclear weapons program. However, the US government will issue "waivers" for national security reasons that will allow the US to fulfill its obligations under the 1994 Agreed Framework, which basically deals with the annual delivery by the US to the DPRK of 500 metric tons of heavy oil fuel, Whitehouse Spokesperson Ari Fleischer said. US Secretary of State Colin Powell recommended to President Bush that the certifications be denied because the DPRK has not provided sufficient information to international monitors. Non- certification, Fleischer said, is "a strong messages to North Korea that they need to comply with their international obligations and agreements. The United States is complying, and this is a message to North Korea that it's important for them to do so as well."

2. DPRK-PRC Refugee Search

Agence France-Presse ("CHINA, NKOREA HUNT FOR NORTH KOREAN REFUGEES: EVANGELISTS," 03/20/02) reported that the PRC and the DPRK have launched a massive hunt for DPRK citizens hiding in the PRC following last week's defection by 25 DPRK citizens, an evangelist group said. "Many truckloads of arrested North Korean escapees are being taken away every day ... some of them commit suicide by jumping over the bridge into the Yalu River," the ROK's Yerang Mission said. "One hundred and fifty North Korean agents were dispatched and they, together with Chinese agents, are searching one house after another to ferret out North Korean refugees," it said. The hunt for DPRK citizens is concentrated on northeastern provinces in the PRC, including Jilin, Heilongjiang and Liaoning, where tens of thousands of DPRK citizens are hiding.

3. CIA View of PRC Militarization

Agence France-Presse ("VIEWING US AS OBSTACLE TO ITS RISE, CHINA MODERNIZES MILITARY: CIA," 03/20/02) reported that in testimony to the US Senate Armed Services Committee on the worldwide threats facing the US, CIA director George Tenet stated that the PRC continues to view the US as the primary obstacle to its rise as a great power in Asia and is modernizing its military to put US forces at risk in the event of a confrontation over Taiwan. Tenet also said, "China is developing an increasingly competitive economy and building a modern military force with the ultimate objective of asserting itself as a great power in east Asia. It fears we are gaining regional influence at China's expense and it views our encouragement of a Japanese military role in counter-terrorism as support for Japanese rearmament." Tenet also spotlighted the PRC as a proliferator of missile technology, selling expertise to Pakistan, Iran and several other countries. Most of its efforts involve development of solid propellant ballistic missiles but it also has sold cruise missiles to Iran, he said. "This is in spite of Beijing's November 2000 missile pledge not to assist in any way countries seeking to develop nuclear capable ballistic missiles," he said. "We are closely watching Beijing's compliance with its bilateral commitment in 1996 not to assist unsafeguarded nuclear facilities, and its pledge in 1997 not to provide any new nuclear cooperation to Iran," he said.

4. PRC-ROK Relations

Reuters (Paul Eckert, "CHINA'S SEOUL ENVOY DECRIES N.KOREA REFUGEE EVENTS," Seoul, 03/20/02) reported that PRC ambassador to the ROK Li Bin denied Wednesday that there was a DPRK refugee problem in the PRC, saying incidents like last week's embassy defection were staged by people bent on undermining PRC-ROK ties. "As China's ambassador to South Korea, I don't want to see these kind of troublesome incidents," he told a news conference to mark 10 years of diplomatic ties between Beijing and Seoul. Asked about reports that the PRC will crack down on aid workers and human rights groups who were helping DPRK refugees in the PRC, Li said some activists were "breaking China's laws."

Agence France-Presse ("CHINA WARNS SEOUL OVER NORTH KOREAN REFUGEES," 03/20/02) reported that PRC ambassador Li Bin warned of difficulties in ties with the ROK unless groups helping DPRK refugees in other countries were restrained. "It is true that there exist an absolutely small number of people who search for North Korean escapees and arrange for their fleeing to other countries in violation of Chinese laws," Li said. "If this situation continues unchecked, there will certainly arise difficulties in Sino-South Korea relations," Li told journalists. He said those people were seeking to "create problems." Li also repeated the PRC's position that DPRK citizens hiding in the PRC were not political refugees but illegal economic migrants and should not be allowed refugee status.

5. PRC Nuclear Posture

Agence France-Presse ("CHINA HAILS OWN STRATEGIC NUCLEAR FORCE AMID RISING TENSIONS WITH US," 03/20/02) reported that several PRC newspapers including the People's Liberation Army Daily, the People's Daily and other newspapers carried as their top story a eulogy of the PRC's missile and nuclear forces. The article, titled "Forging a Shield of Peace for the Republic", described an exercise in which computers simulated a nuclear attack from an enemy power and the response of "Red Force", or the PRC. "'Red Force' employs modern procedures to rapidly decide on a war plan, deploying new types of mobile launchers to remote mountains and forests," the article said. Concerning the timing of the article, Paul Harris, an expert on PRC-US relations at Hong Kong's Lingnan University observed, "The likelihood of this being coincidental is as remote as one can get."

6. PRC View of Taiwan-US Relations

Agence France-Presse ("CHINA ISSUES STERN WARNING OVER US ACTIONS ON TAIWAN," 03/20/02) reported that the PRC has warned the US that a "freezing wind" was chilling relations because of recent US policy towards Taiwan, putting at risk newly-improved bilateral ties. The statement came shortly after CIA director George Tenet said the PRC considered the US a threat to its influence in East Asia. "China is developing an increasingly competitive economy and building a modern military force with the ultimate objective of asserting itself as a great power in east Asia," Tenet said in testimony to the Senate Armed Services Committee on the worldwide threats facing the US. "It fears we are gaining regional influence at China's expense and it views our encouragement of a Japanese military role in counter-terrorism as support for Japanese rearmament," he added. The article continued, "Since the beginning of March, what the US government has done with regard to bilateral ties is putting them in jeopardy with its erroneous move. The US government must correct this serious mistake and put up no new barriers to the development of China-US relations."

7. ROK-US Joint Military Exercises

Agence France-Presse ("US AND SOUTH KOREA TO STAGE BIGGEST ANTI-NORTH DRILLS," 03/20/02) reported that on Thursday hundreds of thousands of US and ROK troops will start their biggest ever simulated conflict against the DPRK which the DPRK has angrily condemned as a war provocation. US military officials said on the eve of the week-long event that the exercises are purely defensive. The drill will be the biggest since the 1950-53 Korean War. The joint US-South Korean Combined Forces Command (CFC) in Seoul said the exercise from March 21 to March 27 would for the first time merge two separate joint military drills for training efficiency. This means hundreds of thousands of troops would take part, although the military gave no precise details. A CFC spokesman said the drill would involve nearly every US and ROK military unit on the peninsula and other US troops brought in from abroad. A DPRK foreign ministry spokesperson claimed that the planned US-South Korean drill was part of "very dangerous war gambles to seize the chance to provoke a nuclear war" targeting the DPRK. Rodong Sinmun, the official newspaper of DPRK, has called the drill "a declaration of war."

8. ROK View of DPRK-US Relations

The Associated Press ("S.KOREA: NORTH MUST OPEN TALKS WITH US," Seoul, 03/20/02) and Reuters ("SOUTH'S KIM: N. KOREA HAS NO CHOICE BUT U.S. TALKS," Seoul, 03/20/02) reported

that ROK President Kim Dae-jung said on Wednesday that the DPRK had no choice but to return eventually to talks with the US and the ROK would do its utmost to help the two sides resume dialogue. Speaking to Foreign Ministry officials, Kim said the DPRK could best secure help for its economy by talking with the US. "We must do our utmost to help North Korea and the United States to resume dialogue." Kim concluded, "What North Korea needs most now is safeguards for its political system and economic assistance, and only the United States can provide this," he said. Kim's remarks were released by his chief spokesperson Park Sun-sook.

The NAPSNet Daily Report aims to serve as a forum for dialogue and exchange among peace and security specialists. Conventions for readers and a list of acronyms and abbreviations are available to all recipients. For descriptions of the world wide web sites used to gather information for this report, or for more information on web sites with related information, see the collection of other NAPSNet resources.
We invite you to reply to today's report, and we welcome commentary or papers for distribution to the network.

Produced by the Nautilus Institute for Security and Sustainable Development in partnership with:

BK21 The Education and Research Corps for East Asian Studies
Department of Political Science, Korea University, Seoul, Republic of Korea

Center for American Studies,
Fudan University, Shanghai, People's Republic of China

International Peace Research Institute (PRIME),
Meiji Gakuin University, Tokyo, Japan

Monash Asia Institute,
Monash University, Clayton, Australia

Brandon Yu: napsnet@nautilus.org
Berkeley, California, United States

Timothy L. Savage: napsnet@nautilus.org
Berkeley, California, United States

Kim Young-soo: yskim328@hotmail.com
Seoul, Republic of Korea

Hibiki Yamaguchi: hibikiy84@hotmail.com
Tokyo, Japan

Saiko Iwata: saiko@akira.ne.jp
Tokyo, Japan

Hiroya Takagi: hiroya_takagi@hotmail.com
Tokyo, Japan

Peter Razvin: icipu@glas.apc.org
Moscow, Russian Federation

Wu Chunsi: cswu@fudan.ac.cn

Shanghai, People's Republic of China

Dingli Shen: dlshen@fudan.ac.cn
Shanghai, People's Republic of China

John McKay: John.McKay@adm.monash.edu.au
Clayton, Australia

View this online at: https://nautilus.org/napsnet/napsnet-daily-report/napsnet-daily-report-20-march-2002/

Nautilus Institute
608 San Miguel Ave., Berkeley, CA 94707-1535 | Phone: (510) 423-0372 | Email: nautilus@nautilus.org